(c) if so, what steps have been taken by his Ministry to ensure that the benefit reaches the common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANIA): (a) Government have from time to time reduced customs duty on certain drugs, drug intermediates and finished medicines in public interest.

(b) and (c) The prices of specfied drugs are fixed by the Administrative Ministry under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1987. While fixing the prices of drugs under this Order, the extent of reduction of customs duty is taken into account. In the case of drugs which are not under price control, drug manufacturers and their Associations are advised by the administrative Ministry to pass on the benefit to the extent of duty concession to the consumers.

Payment of Enhanced Rent for State Bank of India, Delhi Cantt. Branch Premises

2082. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:

SHRI DHARAM PAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rent of State Bank of India building at Delhi Cantonment was enhanced from Rs. 5,339/- to Rs. 25,000|- per month in 1984, with the condition that the same will be payable after the completion of another two strong rooms in the rented premises;

(b) whether it is also a fact that rent at enhanced rate of Rs. 25,000|- per month is being paid since 1984, although the construction of additional two strong rooms was completed only in 1987;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the matter was brought to the notice of the then Finance Minister in July, 1986; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative what action Government propose to take against erring officials in the State Bank of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) State Bank of India has reported that the rent of its Delhi Cantt. Branch was revised from Rs. 5339|- to Rs. 25000|- per month *w.e.f.* 1-1-84. The enhancement of rent was part of a package deal which envisaged, among other things, provision of two strong rooms, replacement of entire electric wiring, water proofing of certain roofs, renovation of outhouses, etc. However, as there was considerable delay in the completion of required construction and carrying out of additions|alterations in the premises, the payment of the enhanced rent to the landlords was stopped *w.e.f.* February, 1988. The landlords have since completed the major portion of the work under the contract and the bank is re-examining the position regardng the release of the agreed rent.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) State Bank of India was advised to investigate the matter. As a result of its investigation, certain discrepancies came to notice. The bank has already advised its concerned Local Head Office to take necessary action to remedy the discrepancies.

Direct Taxes Advisory Committee

2083. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA:

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the Direct Taxes Advisory Committees at the All India level and regional levels have not yet been constituted;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) when such committees are likely to be constituted and what are the reasons for the delay; and

(d) when the terms of the last Committees expired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) The Central Direct Taxes Advisory Committee which became due for re-constitution in October, 1988 has not yet been re-constituted. Some regional Direct Taxes Advisory Committees have also not yet been re-constituted.

(b) and (c) The re-constitution of these committees is a time consuming process. Suggestions are received from Commissioners of Income-tax and other public bodies. It requires considerable time to scrutinise these suggestions. Efforts are being made to re-constitute the Committees as early as possible. It may be mentioned that in respect of Regional Direct Taxes Advisory Committees, the previous Committee will continue to function until the committee is re-constituted.

(d) The term of Central Direct Taxes Advisory Committee expired in October, 1988. About Regional Direct Taxes Advisory Committees, the information would be too lengthy as the date varies in each case.

Suggestions made by Maharashtra Government regarding Small Savings Scheme

2084. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maharashtra Government has made some suggestions regarding Small Savings Scheme in the State to the Central Government; and

(b) if so, what is Central Government's reaction to each of these suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) In the recent past, no suggestion for improvement of Small Savings Scheme has been received excepting extending benefit of Section 80(L) of Income Tax Act to investments in National Savings Certificate VIII (Issue). This suggestion has not been agreed to.

Delay in the Appointment of Chairman-cum-Managing Directors and Executive Directors in Nationalised Banks

2085. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an inordinate delay in the appointment of Chairman-cum-Managing Directors as well as Executive Directors in Nationalised Banks;

(b) if so, what are the names of the banks where such appointments are to be made and the reasons for delay in appointing the MDs/Chairman/Executive Directors; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that in the absence of appointment of top executives, the corporate performance of these banks is suffering and if so, what steps are being taken to fill up such vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) At present, the position of Chairman and Managing Director is vacant in one nationalised bank *viz.* Bank of Maharashtra. The position of Executive Director is vacant in 4 banks *viz.* Bank of Maharashtra, Bank of India, Canara Bank and Punjab and Sind Bank. The selection process to fill up these vacancies has already been initiated. It has been the endeavour of the Government to ensure timely decisions regarding appointment of whole-time directors in nationalised banks.

The performance of all nationalised banks including those where vacancies of whole-time directors exist is monitored on a continual basis by Government and Reserve Bank of India and such measures as considered necessary are taken from time to time to ensure their effective performance.